

Internationaler Klub für Französische Bulldoggen e.V.

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Website: <http://www.ikfb.de/>

ZTP: http://www.ikfb.de/merkblatt_ztp.pdf



“We are the nerds”

Dr. Anne Posthoff, the president of the German International Club for French Bulldogs, explains why the rules for breeding French Bulldogs in Germany are amongst the strictest in the world.

Dear Anne, we want to talk about the regulations and the breeding test of the German French Bulldog Club today (IKFB). When did the IKFB introduce these rules?

In 1991, the president of the German International Club for French Bulldogs (IKFB), Mr Blumenrode, and Barbara Pallasky, then the head of the breeding commission and later president of the IKFB, established the breeding test for French Bulldogs in Germany.

What was the reason for establishing these new regulations?

The main impulse was the IKFB's attempt to counter the criticism by animal welfare organisations. They had been criticizing the brachycephalic breeds for a long time, arguing that these breeds are not healthy and cannot breathe well. It proved to be a great decision to establish this breeding test. Before we established these regulations and the test, in my opinion the criticism of the welfare organisations had been partly valid. We observe that the dogs that were bred after the test was introduced are much healthier, so this test and the regulations were very efficient in dealing with the criticism. With time passing, the breeding test is constantly being modified.

Can you give an example? What was the last modification?

The last one was in 2012. We established the ultrasound examination of the heart as mandatory part of the breeding test.

What precisely does the breeding test consist of?

The test has six different components: A DNA profile, a ultrasound check of the heart, an x ray of the spine, an examination for patella luxation, a fitness test for brachycephalic breeds and an examination carried out by the breeding commission of the IKFB. All these tests are carried out by veterinarians and are reviewed by external experts, except for the examination of the breeding commissions. Those two are done on the occasion of special events, called ZTP and are carried out by members of the club approximately 4 times a year. Of course, this means that some dogs that go through these tests don't

pass and thus don't obtain qualification for breeding under the IKFB. Every year, approximately 5 percent don't pass.

Besides the breeding test, you mentioned the regulations for breeding as another key aspect of the IKFB's work. Could you kindly elaborate on this?

The breeding regulations are quite a heavy document, they consist of 25 pages. They specify a lot of details concerning breeders and how they should raise their puppies. So you could say that in Germany, we are the nerds in comparison to breeders in other countries.

That sounds complicated. Could you kindly give some practical examples?

For example, the regulations say that a bitch can only have two c-sections in her lifetime, meaning that the bitch loses qualification for breeding after she has had two c-sections. In case breeders don't follow this rule, if they have another try with this bitch and the birth happens via c-section – which is very likely once the bitch has already had two c-sections – they have to pay a fee and the puppies from this c-section will not get pedigrees. A second example: You have to obtain the IKFB's official approval for every single mating. The idea behind this rule: We try to avoid having the same mating twice, because we want to keep the gene pool of the breed as diverse as possible. If the exact same mating happens multiple times, this narrows the gene pool.

I heard that the French Bulldog Clubs in other countries have similar tests and regulations. Is there anything special about the situation with the IKFB in Germany?

Yes, definitely. The key difference is that the breeding test in Germany, consisting of the various components described above, is mandatory. In almost all other countries this is not the case. There, the regulations are only seen as recommendations but are not strictly enforced. We put a great deal of manpower and energy in the enforcement of the regulations, for example through an intricate system of so-called breed referees. There's one for every region of Germany. They are in very close contact with the IKFB breeders in their region and they are the ones visiting the litters twice in nine weeks after the birth in order to check that everything is according to the regulations.

Dear Anne, thank you very much for your time.

Carolina Loewe